



STATE OF WASHINGTON
WASHINGTON STATE BOARD OF HEALTH
1102 SE Quince Street • PO Box 47990
Olympia, Washington 98504-7990

January 9, 2002

TO: Washington State Board of Health Members
FROM: Craig McLaughlin, Senior Health Policy Manager
RE: Monitoring Legislation and Communicating with the Legislature

Background and Summary:

January 14, 2002 will be the first day of Legislative session. This is a short session year, which ostensibly means the Legislature is meeting for 60 days with the primary purpose of passing a supplemental budget. The \$1.25 billion projected revenue shortfall, major unresolved issues such as transportation, and interest in responding to issues raised by the events of September 11 and their aftermath all suggest a busy session that could necessitate a special session.

Staff proposes to monitor legislative actions and communicate with the Legislature in a manner consistent with SBOH Policy 2001-001 (see attachment) and with the approach during the 2001 session. Staff members will identify bills for review and monitoring in several ways:

- Alerts from committee staffers, members of the Legislature, and managers from the Department of Health and other agencies
- Review of weekly calendars for the full Legislature and for key committees
- Attendance at semiweekly DOH Bill Review meetings
- Monitoring of LegLink, the on-line information system
- In-house bill reviews during weekly SBOH staff meetings

In accordance with Policy 2001-001, these monitoring efforts will seek to identify any legislation that directly impacts the Board's statutory powers and duties or is directly related to one of the board's priority areas. When staff members identify a bill of interest, they will contact the chair or other appropriate members of the board by e-mail, often with a recommendation for action. In most cases, the recommendation will be that an interested board member send a letter. Staff will draft such letters for the interested board member's signature. In a few instances, the staff may recommend testifying at a hearing or signing in and being available to testify if asked. No action will be taken by board staff without review and approval by a board member.

The Senior Health Policy Manager will also post information about bills of interest to the Bill Watch section of the Board's Web site and update that information weekly.

Recommended Board Action:

None. Contents of this memo are consistent with existing policies and practices.